



The Market Basket

*A Quarterly Update on Agricultural Marketing in Broome County
Spring, 2009*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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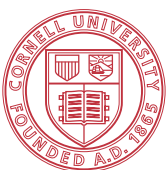
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FARMERS' MARKETS SEEK VENDORS

Farmers' market season is upon us and the farmers' markets in Broome County are currently seeking vendors. This is a great opportunity to sell your product and increase your customer base. Many markets will require liability insurance in the amount of \$1M in addition to a seasonal vendor fee. The farmers' markets seeking vendors are the following (and the information includes the market manager). Please contact them to find out more information.

Downtown Binghamton, Eric Denk (607) 778-2130

Deposit, Dorothy Crantz (607) 467-2956

Endicott, John Purdy (607) 642-8439

Northside of Binghamton, Lea Webb (607) 723-0110

Otsiningo Park, Laura Biasillo (607) 584-5007

Whitney Point, Niechelle Wade (607) 692-7911

To get information on markets in other counties, contact your local cooperative extension.

NEW YORK LAWMAKERS PUSH FOR GREATER ACCESS TO LOCAL PRODUCE IN SCHOOLS

taken from School Nutrition Association website (<http://www.schoolnutrition.org>)

March 6, 2009 – New York State Senator Darrel J. Aubertine and U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) have joined forces to advocate for programs which make locally grown fruits and vegetables more available in schools.

The 2008 Farm Bill authorizes schools to buy local produce that has not been processed for students to eat through the school based child nutrition programs including the National School Lunch Program and the Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program. For convenience, the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program operates best when local produce has been washed, sliced and bagged, since it is eaten outside of the lunchroom.

A recent USDA memo on interpretation of what it means for local produce to be considered "processed" has closed up this market for local farms. A USDA policy memo dated January 9, 2009, states that "De minimis handling does not include chopped, cut, or diced products and therefore geographic preference may not be applied to agricultural products that have been chopped, cut, sliced, or diced." Senator Aubertine and Senator Gillibrand recently wrote a letter asking USDA Secretary Vilsack to reverse this interpretation, in order to "help the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program succeed in helping local agriculture and making our children healthier."

In the Farm Bill's Joint Explanatory Statement, the authors of the bill said the term "unprocessed" should not be taken literally, but rather "logically implemented" to allow the preparation necessary to deliver farm products "to school food authorities in a usable form."

WORKSHOPS

FOOD SAFETY ON THE FARM – FOR FARMERS' MARKET VENDORS AND FARM STAND OPERATORS

Attend a session centered around food safety on your farm for farmers selling direct to the public either as a farmers' market vendor a farm stand operator. A session for fruit and vegetable growers will take place on Monday April 27th at 9am at Cornell Cooperative Extension-Broome County. A session for meat producers and those selling baked goods will be Tuesday April 28th at 7pm. The cost is \$10/farm and will include a handbook from Cornell University. To register, or for more information, contact Carol at (607) 584-9966.

LET'S WRITE YOUR BUSINESS PLAN – APRIL 13TH, 6 - 9PM

This two-hour workshop will provide an overview of a comprehensive business plan – contents (both the narrative and financial statement components), format and how it can be used. The presenter, Ginny L. Robert, is the Director of the Entrepreneurial Assistance Program at BCC. She has specialized in entrepreneurship for 19 years, helping thousands of individuals to start and grow small businesses. Participants will be given a diskette that has a template to develop the financial spreadsheets with Excel software. Optional purchase of Let's Write Your Business Plan, a workbook developed by the presenter, will also be available.

PURE CATSKILLS FARM TO MARKET CONFERENCE, APRIL 6TH 9AM-3PM

Producers, processors and purchasers of local food are invited to the Farm to Market Conference on April 6 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at SUNY-Delhi, Route 10 in Delhi, NY. Organized by the Pure Catskills Buy Local Campaign, and sponsored by the Watershed Agricultural Council, the event will be an educational and networking opportunity for key players in the local food system. The day will include workshops related to direct-sales marketing of farm products, a lunch of local food and an afternoon, open-networking session for farmers and buyers.

Planned workshop topics will include Farmers Market Success, Successful Events and Profitable Promotions,

Working with Restaurants, Working with Retailers and Distributors, and Value-Added Products from Recipe to Retail. Each workshop will feature a panel of local farmers, regional buyers and agricultural educators.

Full conference details are available at purecatskills.com. Early-bird conference registration is \$25 for Pure Catskills members and \$35 for nonmembers. Register by March 30. For more information or to register, visit purecatskills.com or contact Leslie Deysenroth by email at ldeysenroth@nycwatershed.org or by phone at (607) 865-7090. People interested in renewing or enrolling in the Pure Catskills Buy Local campaign, can do so online or the day of the conference.

Pure Catskills is an economic initiative of the Watershed Agricultural Council. Visit www.purecatskills.com or www.nycwatershed.org for more information.

ORGANIC BEEKEEPING: PRINCIPLES & PRACTICES APRIL 24TH & 25TH

This workshop covers topics suitable for all beekeepers, from novice to expert, with a focus on intermediate and advanced techniques. An optional Friday afternoon session for beginners demonstrates hive construction and the basics of handling bees.* The rest of the workshop – Friday evening and all day Saturday – presents a balanced view of natural beekeeping topics not ordinarily covered in lectures and articles, including: swarming as an expression of the bees' vitality; working with swarms and making splits; the importance of wax production; and acid treatments for Varroa mites. Weather permitting, the day is punctuated with visits to the hives, where techniques for handling bees are demonstrated.

*Beginners are strongly advised to take a separate one-day introductory workshop before attending (such as that offered on February 21). If that is not possible, please sign up for the beginners' session at 2 p.m.

Fee: \$185 / \$225 (includes optional beginners' session). For more information, visit <http://www.pfeiffercenter.org>.

EXPLORING CREDIT/DEBT MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County is offering a free Exploring Credit/Debt Management Issues workshop. This workshop provides information on selecting and using credit wisely, strategies for paying down debt, obtaining and reviewing a credit report, and understanding a credit score. Participants receive free credit management tools. Advance registration required. Please call (607) 584-5016 for available dates and locations.

SAVE ENERGY, SAVE DOLLARS

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County is offering a free Save Energy, Save Dollars workshop to assist participants reduce their energy bills, discover low-cost/no cost energy conservation methods and learn of community resources to financially assist residents in making home improvements. Each household will receive a free energy savings tool kit. Advance registration is required. Please call (607) 584-5016 for available dates and locations.

MAKING ENDS MEET

Cornell Cooperative Extension-Broome County is offering a free money management workshop called Making Ends Meet. Participants will set financial goals, develop spending plans, and learn ways to manage their debt. Each household will receive a free money management tool kit. Advance registration is required. Please call (607) 584-5016 for available dates and locations.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ARTICLES

WHAT NAIS MEANS TO SMALL FARMERS AND RURAL AMERICA

By Shannon Hayes

On Wednesday, March 11th, the U.S. House Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy and Poultry will hold a hearing on the proposed National Animal Identification System (NAIS). On the surface, NAIS is a marvel of technological wizardry whereby we farmers tag every head of livestock in the country and the USDA electronically tracks their whereabouts. In the event of a disease outbreak, they plan to identify within 48 hours which animals are involved, where they are located, and what other animals might have been exposed. After an outpouring of farm and ranch protests, NAIS was made “voluntary at the federal level,” but the status is precarious, because funding to states can be contingent upon mandating compliance. For us as consumers, NAIS may sound like a legislative dream, assuring the American food supply is safe. But for us as citizens, NAIS is a nightmare. Policy opponents argue the program cannot deliver on its promises to thwart disease contagion; it does nothing to contain food-borne illness; it threatens the civil liberties of farmers; it infringes on the religious freedoms of many, like the Amish, who object to the system on grounds that it represents “the mark of the beast.”

Any benefit of this specious proposal goes to big agribusiness by making factory farming practices, where contagious livestock diseases are most likely to occur, seem

safe; moreover, it establishes costly barriers for the ever-growing local food movement. It may help the feedlot beef industry improve its image for the export market. Other beneficiaries include manufacturers of animal identification and tracking systems who stand to garner hefty profits. The program seeks to protect an industrial agricultural system that, through the use of sub-therapeutic antibiotics, confinement farming and unnatural feeding practices, exacerbates the threat of diseases within it, and has spurred the local food movement that rejects its products.

At the same time, NAIS will devastate the alternative local farming system many of us, both as farmers and consumers, have given our life energy to create. By virtue of our farming practices, small pasture-based livestock farms like ours do not suffer the same disease risks as factory farms; in fact, our grazing practices and natural farming methods actually help to thwart them. Pathogenic microbes are less likely to thrive, replicate or develop antibiotic resistant strains when animals are kept in a natural environment, outdoors, on grass. Further, when small farms are full participants in a local food system, tracking a diseased animal doesn't require an exorbitantly expensive national database.

The burden for a program that will safeguard agribusiness interests will be disproportionately shouldered by America's small farmers, rural families, and local food consumers. Worse yet, the burden for administering it will force many rural Americans to lose our way of life.

For factory farms, the costs to implement NAIS protocols are negligible. These operations already use computer technology to monitor their systems, and in the case of confinement swine and poultry operations, all the factory animals that move through a production chain at the same time can be given a single number. On small farms like ours, every single animal will require its own number. That means the cost of tracking a thousand animals moving together through a factory system will be roughly equal to the price that a small farmer will incur for tracking one animal.

In an article for Mother Earth News, Jack Kittredge reports that ID chips are estimated to be somewhere between \$1.50 and \$3 each, depending on the quantity purchased. A rudimentary machine to read the tags may be \$100 - \$200. It is expected that most reporting will have to be done online (requiring monthly internet fees), plus there will be an added cost of the database subscription, resulting in about \$500-\$1000 (conservatively) per year per premise for the fixed costs. The variable costs, the number of animal ID tags, and the frequency of data entry, would be added to that figure. I estimate the combined cost for our farm at \$10,000. That's almost 30% of the average income in this county.

Many of us farmers live on the dark side of the digital divide. At Sap Bush Hollow Farm, dial-up is our only internet option, and it is difficult to maintain a connection. The frustration is compounded when the NAIS requires that we report the movement of every animal on the premises within 48 hours. Imagine the reporting nightmare we will face each May, when 100 ewes give birth to 200 lambs out on pasture, and then, six weeks later when those pastures are grazed off, the entire flock must be herded one mile up the road to a second farm that we rent. Add to that the arrival every three weeks of three hundred chicks, the three 500 pound sows who will each give birth to about 10 piglets out in the pastures twice per year (and who will attack anyone who comes near their babies more fiercely than a junkyard pit bull), then a batch of 100 baby turkeys, and the free-roaming laying hens. Additional tagging and record keeping would be required for the geese and guinea fowl who nest somewhere behind the barn and in the hedgerows, occasionally visiting the neighbors' farms, hatching broods of goslings and keets that run wild all summer long. Double that accounting figure each time one of those animals is sold, dies, or is trucked to a slaughterhouse. Then, factor in the penalties for non-compliance if we fail to account for a lamb quietly stolen by a coyote, or the added costs if we suffer injury when trying to come between a protective sow and her piglets.

For my family, the upshot is more out-of-pocket expenses, less time stewarding the land and animals, mutual stress and danger when tagging these animals, less time with our customers and community, and a lot more time swearing at the computer.

Yet another scar to be left by this program will be on rural America's cultural and economic landscape. Rural families have long been able to thrive on wholesome local food while subsisting on incomes well below the national average. They do this by keeping a flock of chickens in the backyard, feeding out a pig, milking a family cow or goat, or teaming up with a neighbor to raise a beef animal. Rural youth take on backyard livestock for 4-H projects, learn more about a future in farming, earn cash for college, and make a contribution to the family's food security. The annual fixed costs of participating in NAIS will exceed the value of the livestock for these families.

If we want to step up measures to secure our food supply, then the first step should be prevention. In a March 8th 2005 letter to the Committee on Homeland Security, the U.S. Government Accountability Office openly discloses that "the highly concentrated breeding and rearing practices of our livestock industry make it a vulnerable target for terrorists because diseases could spread rapidly and be very difficult to contain." The big factory farms

are the problem, not the little dispersed operations and that dot the countryside. Thus, to heighten our food security, we should place limits on industrial agriculture and stimulate the growth of small farms and backyard food production around the country, –not try to put them out of business. In a white paper on NAIS alternatives, the non-profit group Farm and Ranch Freedom points out that the GAO report on Agro-terrorism identified no deficiencies in our current animal tracking practices, which include, among others, the brand system, sale and slaughter records, producer records, and numerous disease tracking and prevention programs. Nationwide educational efforts to train farmers and veterinarians about proper management, bio-security practices and disease recognition would be a far more effective and less costly alternative to the prohibitively expensive NAIS.

Anyone who has taken a drive in the country can attest to how the small farms and little backyard operations, run on a shoestring budget, define our landscape and our way of life. The institution of a National Animal Identification System will effectively remove one of the most defining features from the American countryside. NAIS will slam small farmers. But it reaches further than that, to the rural poor who put food on the table through subsistence livestock production, to the local feed and supply stores who service us, the slaughter houses, the livestock truckers, the sale barns where we trade, and the county fairs and community celebrations that showcase our efforts and encourage our youth to consider a future in farming.

The official comment period for the current USDA proposed rule to require all farms and ranches where animals are raised to be registered in a federal database under NAIS closes on March 16th. To comment on the program, go to: <http://www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main?main=DocketDetail&d=APHIS-2007-0096>.

For more background on NAIS and political updates, visit the NOFA-MASS website, <http://www.nofamass.org/news/naisalert.php>

Shannon Hayes, Ph.D. is the host of grassfedcooking.com and author of *The Grassfed Gourmet Cookbook* and *The Farmer and the Grill*. She works with her family on Sap Bush Hollow Farm, a diversified pasture-based livestock operation in Upstate New York. Shannon's newest book, *Radical Homemakers: Reclaiming domesticity from a consumer culture*, is due out in April 2010.

HONEY IS NATURAL PRESERVATIVE

Antioxidant-rich honey is a healthy alternative to chemical additives and refined sweeteners in commercial salad dressings, said a new University of Illinois study.

“To capitalize on the positive health effects of honey, we experimented with using honey in salad dressings,” said Nicki Engeseth, a U of I associate professor of food chemistry. “We found that the antioxidants in honey protected the quality of the salad dressings for up to nine months while sweetening them naturally.”

Engeseth's study substituted honey for EDTA, an additive used to keep the oils in salad dressings from oxidizing, and high-fructose corn syrup, used by many commercial salad-dressing producers to sweeten their salad dressing recipes.

“We chose clover and blueberry honeys for the study after an analysis of the sweetening potential, antioxidant activity, and phenolic profiles of 19 honeys with varying characteristics,” said the scientist.

The dressings were also compared to a control dressing that contained ingredients found in current commercial salad dressings, she said.

Engeseth explained a problem the scientists encountered in using honey in a salad dressing system. “Salad dressings are emulsions—they contain oil and water; and to keep these ingredients together in one phase, manufacturers rely on emulsifiers and thickening agents to avoid thinning of the dressing and separation of the oil and water phase,” she said.

When the researchers found that enzymes in the honey broke the emulsion by attacking the starch that was used to thicken the dressing, they came up with a new formulation that used xanthan gum as a thickening agent, which they then used in all the dressings, she said.

The researchers then stored the dressings under various conditions, including 37 degrees Celsius (accelerated storage) for six weeks and 23 degrees Celsius and 4 degrees Celsius for one year, followed by an evaluation of their oxidative stability.

“After nine months of storage, both types of honey were as effective as EDTA in protecting against oxidation or spoilage. Blueberry honey performed slightly better than clover,” she said.

Engeseth said that many consumers prefer products with natural ingredients and that salad dressings made with honey should appeal to these consumers.

“There's such a wide range of salad dressings on the market—some unique salad dressings as well as inexpensive products that perform beautifully. If manufacturers are interested in developing salad dressings that have a healthy twist, we've demonstrated that using honey as both an antioxidant and a sweetener is one way to do this,” she said.

WHY FARMERS' MARKETS CAN'T BE FREE OR WHAT'S IT WORTH TO YOU

The old saying "you get what you pay for" is often true and farmers' markets can be a prime example. Yes, a market should be free to the public, after all, farmers are there to make money and there should be as few impediments to the consumer as possible. We want to make the experience as enjoyable and enticing as possible to the consumer.

But, what about the vendors? Just how much should they pay for the privilege to sell at a farmers' market? On the one hand some might say "whatever it takes", and others may say "nothing at all, the market should pay me". Somewhere in the middle is probably more realistic. How much would it cost in time, fuel and expenses to sell the same product elsewhere? ie build a stand and pay taxes and upkeep on the building. I won't attempt to put an exact dollar figure on the answer, but we can and should look at what we are getting, and should be getting for the fees paid to sell at a farmers' market.

Farmers' markets offer great potential to the communities and businesses that create them. A new publication from the Farmers' Market Federation of New York extols the Value of Farmers' Markets to New York's Communities".

Markets bring consumers to the area around them. Consumers in turn spend almost as much in the surrounding businesses as they do at the markets. Markets also provide economic value to farmers. Sales at the 59 Green Markets in NYC support over 25,000 acres of farmland. In the state there are now about 400 farmers' markets, each with farmers bringing fresh, local product to consumers, saving energy and stimulating the local economy.

In addition to economics, farmers' markets offer health and nutrition benefits to the consumers who include these products in their diet. Markets also create a place where social interaction benefits individuals and the community as a whole. They become one of the gathering places where the public recognizes value in their community.

Given all of these local benefits, why aren't farmers' markets supported by public funds? Markets in New York are for the most part run by not for profits or local governments and are managed by volunteers. The vast majority have managers that receive little or no compensation for their efforts. In many cases markets are locally supported, granted sometimes minimally. On the other hand, municipalities do often provide space for a market. Given real estate values in downtown locations, this can be a significant contribution. If the setting is good, it may be the most important contribution to the success of the market. Some municipalities provide publicity and may even carry insurance for the marketplace. There are many villages which have provided staff to

write grants and many have been successful in receiving Federal and State funds to improve the market.

Let's look at a typical farmers' market budget. Certainly most markets in larger municipalities have more extensive budgets than those in more rural areas. However any manager would tell you that if they had more money they could always find ways to spend it that would benefit the market. Larger markets may have paid staff, but often this may only be a part time manager as they may be tied to another city department with a range of other duties. Smaller markets are the norm. In a 2005 survey of market managers it was found that over 60% of markets in the state have less than 15 vendors. These same markets charged vendors fees of as little as \$10/season to over \$500 for a space. Many are charging less than \$100/ season, but does this figure cover the cost of creating and maintaining a strong market? A typical market of 10 vendors, paying \$75 each will only generate \$750 of revenue for the entire season. Management costs, advertising and promotion, security, and insurance are all supposed to be covered by this huge cash cow. A minimum cost for a paid manager might be 10 hours/week at \$10/hour for 20 weeks or \$2,000; insurance \$500 plus, professional membership \$100-\$300, and promotion and signage \$1,500. Even a small market would need about \$4,000 to do an adequate job for the market. Looking at these facts it is no wonder that new, smaller markets are struggling to get off the ground. Even long established markets may not have the funds they need.

What are the answers? There are many and although some markets are similar, there are no two that are the same. At first glance it might be easy to just increase the vendor fees. This certainly could help, but in our example, doubling the fee would only bring the revenue up to \$1,500 for the year, still a relatively small figure. Well then let's quadruple the fees from \$75 up to \$300, bringing in \$3,000. This represents a cost to the farmer of only \$17/week for 18 weeks. That could make quite a difference to the market, but many may have difficulty justifying this amount to their vendors. Managers want vendors to be successful and to return next year. Most vendors should be able to meet this cost and as long as the funds are well spent, the market should grow. If fees are increased, it should be up to the vendors to make sure that the money is dedicated to items that they believe are important. This brings us to our second point.

There is another option in conjunction with fee increases to improve farmers' markets. In my view the farmers themselves may be an important part of the solution. After all, they are the ones who stand to benefit financially from a strong, successful market. In the article title, I am not referring exclusively to dollars and cents

when speaking about a market being free. There are other assets that can be mobilized to create a vibrant, successful farmers' market. To begin with, most markets have governing boards and committees. Active participation in these groups can be very important. Items that need input and action include rules and governance, publicity, budgets and fund development. Farmer participation in these items has at least two major benefits. First of all, farmers have ideas on how they think a market should be run. What are the needs of the market? What is the public looking for? Being on a board is a way to express these in a positive way. This is not to say that all of the input should come from the farmer/vendors because it certainly is valuable to have a balance of ideas from those who do not have a personal financial benefit, but markets would be stronger if more vendors would provide input.

A second very important reason for farmer participation is that it shows a level of commitment and credibility to the market. Community leaders and market sponsors take a serious view of the value of the market when the participants are willing to put their own time into the market, beyond being there to sell. This fact should not be ignored. Gaining outside support and having a community connection is very important to the long term success of a market.

Here is a list of what a farmer/vendor can do to make their markets better

- 1) **always bring the best** quality products to the market
- 2) **be committed**, view the farmers' market as an extension of your business
- 3) **volunteer** to be on the board or a committee and be active not passive, keeping in mind that when you are at the market, you are a vendor and not the sheriff
- 4) **promote the market**, always have only good things to say about the market and other vendors when speaking with the public
- 5) **advertise**, run your own ads in addition to what the market does. Let the public know you are there for them
- 6) **signage**, have excellent signage in the market, including prices and farm identification
- 7) **be part of a team**, take turns helping with the market, such as setting up sandwich boards or other public signs
- 8) **attend market meetings** and verbally participate, what you think and say matters
- 9) **help find volunteers** to do some of the tasks such as running an EBT machine, that can free up a manager to use their time and skills most effectively

- 10) **help develop** a marketing plan and or long term business plan for the market
- 11) **offer product** to be used for cooking demonstrations and weekly market basket giveaways
- 12) **offer to sponsor a special event** at the market and remember to always work with the manager and board on these ideas
- 13) **speak to your local** government representatives, let them know that the market is important to you and the community, give them ideas of how they can help
- 14) **be creative** and add your own ideas to this list

MICHELLE OBAMA'S AGENDA INCLUDES HEALTHFUL EATING

By RACHEL L. SWARNS

WASHINGTON (NY Times, March 11, 2009)

THE television cameras were rolling, the journalists were scribbling and the first lady, Michelle Obama, was standing in a soup kitchen rhapsodizing about steamed broccoli. And homemade mushroom risotto. And freshly baked apple-carrot muffins.

Mrs. Obama was praising the menu last week at Miriam's Kitchen, a nonprofit drop-in center serving this city's homeless. And she seized the moment to urge Americans to provide fresh, unprocessed and locally grown foods to their families and to the neediest in their communities.

"You know, we want to make sure our guests here and across the nation are eating nutritious items," said Mrs. Obama, who served lunch to several homeless men and women and delivered eight cases of fresh fruit to the soup kitchen, all donated by White House employees.

"Collect some fruits and vegetables; bring by some good healthy food," she said. "We can provide this kind of healthy food for communities across the country, and we can do it by each of us lending a hand."

In her first weeks in the White House, Mrs. Obama has emerged as a champion of healthful food and healthful living. She has praised community vegetable gardens, opened up her own kitchen to show off the White House chefs' prowess with vegetables and told stories about feeding less fattening foods to her daughters.

White House officials say the focus on healthy living will be a significant item on Mrs. Obama's agenda, which already includes supporting working families and military spouses. As the nation battles an obesity epidemic and a hard-to-break taste for oversweetened and oversalted dishes, her message is clear: Fresh, nutritious foods are not delicacies to be savored by the wealthy, but critical components of the diets of ordinary and struggling families.

It is a notable shift in direction. The former first lady, Laura

Bush, insisted that fresh, organic foods be served in the White House, but did not broadcast that fact to the public, according to Walter Scheib, who served as executive chef under Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush.

“She just didn’t talk much about it outside the house,” Mr. Scheib said of Mrs. Bush. “Mrs. Obama is taking a higher profile.”

In a speech at the Department of Agriculture last month, Mrs. Obama described herself as “a big believer” in community gardens that provide “fresh fruits and vegetables for so many communities across this nation and world.”

A few days later, she invited television cameras into the White House kitchen and made a point of praising the chefs’ nutritious creations, including creamed spinach without the cream.

Mrs. Obama presented herself not as a celebrity who has appeared on the cover of *Vogue* - though, of course, she has appeared on the cover of *Vogue* - but as a down-to-earth mom who works hard to keep in shape and to please the palates of her two daughters, Sasha, 7, and Malia, 10, who sometimes wrinkle their noses at the greenery on their plates.

“It’s like: How do we keep the calories down but keep the flavors up?” said Mrs. Obama, who also praised a healthy broccoli soup prepared by White House chefs.

“That’s one of the things that we’re talking a lot about,” she said. “When you grow something yourself and it’s close and it’s local, oftentimes it tastes really good.

“And when you’re dealing with kids, for example, you want to get them to try that carrot. Well, if it tastes like a real carrot and it’s really sweet, they’re going to think that it’s a piece of candy. So my kids are more inclined to try different vegetables if they’re fresh and local and delicious.”

The secret to that creamless creamed spinach? Sautéed spinach, olive oil and shallots are whipped into a purée that is light and delicious, according to Cristeta Comerford, the White House executive chef.

Even so, Mrs. Obama conceded, the dish was not a hit with Sasha. No matter what you do, she said ruefully, “sometimes kids are like, ‘It’s green!’ ”

Some of those who had called on President Obama to use the White House as a bully pulpit to help improve Americans’ eating habits are cheering Mrs. Obama on.

They were thrilled to learn that the White House gets fresh fruits and vegetables from farms in Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. And they delighted in the news that the Obamas had served organic wine at their first big White House dinner, a gathering of the nation’s governors last month.

Danny Meyer, the restaurateur, praised Mrs. Obama for speaking “in real human terms about what kind of choices real human beings can make in terms of their own lives.”

Ruth Reichl, the editor of *Gourmet* magazine, said she was impressed to see Mrs. Obama showcase a soup kitchen that serves only fresh food - nothing canned or processed - to the poor.

“They’re not just saying, I want to feed my family this; this is good for us,” said Ms. Reichl of the Obamas. “Clearly Mrs. Obama is making a point. She thinks communities across the nation deserve to have access to fresh fruits and vegetables.”

In addition to speeches, Mrs. Obama is also spreading the word through interviews with celebrity and parents’ magazines.

In the March 9 issue of *People* magazine, for instance, the first lady described her early morning workouts with the president and bared her famously toned arms on the cover. And in the November issue of *Parents* magazine, she and her husband described their decision to ditch juice boxes and processed foods.

“A couple of years ago - you’d never know it by looking at her now - Malia was getting a little chubby,” Mr. Obama told the magazine.

They took action, Mrs. Obama said, when “her doctor - he really monitors this type of thing - suggested we look at her diet. So we cut out juice boxes, sweets and processed foods.”

Advocates for healthful food and living want the Obamas to do even more.

Ms. Reichl would like the White House kitchen to issue regular news releases that describe what the first couple and their daughters are eating. (Then parents across the country could tell their children, “You know, Malia and Sasha were eating salad yesterday. ...”)

Roger Doiron, founding director of Kitchen Gardeners International, a nonprofit group, is one of several people who want the Obamas to plant an edible garden that would serve as a national model.

Mr. Scheib cautioned that no one should expect the Obamas to upend their lifestyle. “This is not to say they’re going to be eating rice cakes and tofu three meals a day, not at all,” he said.

In fact, Mrs. Obama cheerfully admits to an occasional hankering for fast food. It’s all about eating in moderation, she said, emphasizing the kind of flexibility that might make it easier for people to relate to her message.

Last month, the first lady took her staff out to lunch at Five Guys Burgers and Fries, a hamburger chain, where she had a cheeseburger, fries and a Coke. (No, not a Diet Coke.)

Mrs. Obama also enjoys waffles and grits for breakfast, though not every day. And she said that the White House chefs, who can make nutritious meals tasty, have other talents as well.

“They can also make a mean batch of French fries when you want it done,” she said.

April

2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 Northeastern Forest Products Equipment Expo, Watkins Glen, NY April 3&4 http://www.nefexpo.net High Tunnels for Season Extension, CCE-Tioga 9am-3pm, (607) 687-4020	4 Raised Beds in the Garden & the Farm Organism 9am-5pm Pfeiffer Center \$95 http://www.pfeiffercenter.org Noon, Empire State Meat Goat Producer Assoc. 101 Morrison Hall, Cornell Univ. Dr. Tatiana Stanton, (607) 254-6024
5	6 Pruning & It's Effect on Pest Management 1pm-4pm CCE-Delaware (607) 865-6531 \$10pp NYSDEC 1a, 10 & 20 credits available	7 Agritourism Conference, 8:30am-4pm, Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel, Free. 607-535-4300 Marcellus Shale Gas Leasing Landowner Coalitions: Structures, Goals, Issues – Webinar, 3-4pm, http://gasleasing.cce.cornell .	8 Introduction to Vineyard & Winery Establishment 8:30am-4:30pm Fee = \$100 Contact: Linda Aures: lfa2@cornell.edu	9	10	11 Blueberry Pruning Field Day, 10am-2pm, Sidney Center, NY Bring Gloves & Shears. (607) 829 2587
12	13 Let's Write Your Business Plan 6-9pm, CCE-Broome \$15/farm (607) 584-9966	14 Vegetable Gardening for Beginners 6pm, CCE-Broome \$10pp (607) 584-9966 Organic Food from Farm to Family NYC nofany.org	15	16 Choosing Small Scale Processing Products 7pm, CCE-Broome \$10/farm (607) 584-9966	17	18 Backyard Food Workshop: Organic Gardening 101, 9am-noon, Glynwood. \$30, Anita at (845) 265-3338
19	20 <i>Small Fruit IPM Scout Training – Session III.</i> Green Acres Farm, Rochester, NY. 315-787-2367	21	22 Movie Night – “The Greatest Good” CCE-Broome 7pm, Free Pre-register at (607) 584-5013 Deer Fencing, 4-7pm, 395 Shaffer Rd, Newfield, (607) 687-4020	23 Woodlot Management for Multiple Values 6:30-8:30pm, Visitor Center, Rogers Environmental Education Center, Sherburne (607) 335-1210	24 Permaculture Fundamentals Finger Lakes Permaculture Institute \$100-\$250 April 24-26 http://www.fingerlakespermaculture.org	25 Broome County Farm Bureau Auction Fairgrounds in Whitney Point All Day (607) 692-4540
26 Bio-diesel workshop 11am-4pm Attica, NY \$10pp 585-591-0795	27 Food Safety on the Farm – Vegetables For Farmers' Market & Farm Stand Operators 9am-11am \$10/farm Inc. materials (607) 584-9966	28 Food Safety on the Farm – Meats & Other For Farmers' Market & Farm Stand Operators 7pm \$10/farm Inc. materials (607) 584-9966	29	30 Forest Invaders! 6:30-8:30pm Visitor Center, Rogers Environmental Education Center, Sherburne (607) 335-1210		

May

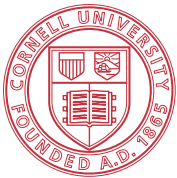
2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Apprentice Level Master Beekeeper Program Cornell University, Dyce Lab for Honey Bee Studies May 2 & 3 9am-6pm Fee is \$140 http://www.masterbeekeeper.org/masterbeekeeper.htm The Game of Logging, 7:30am-4:30pm, \$152, http://www.dnr.cornell.edu/xt/forestconnect/GOL.html
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Mothers Day Wildflower Breakfast Arnot Forest 9am-noon \$8pp 607.535.7161 or cab377@cornell.edu	11	12 Maps & GPS for Landowners CCE-Chenango 6pm-8pm (607) 335-1210 <i>Small Fruit IPM Scout Training – Session IV.</i> Green Acres Farm, Rochester, NY. 315-787-2367	13 Ties to the Land, 7-9pm, Honeoye, NY, \$30/couple, 607-255-2115	14	15	16 Apprentice Level Master Beekeeper Program Cornell University, Dyce Lab for Honey Bee Studies May 16 & 17 9am-6pm Fee is \$140 http://www.masterbeekeeper.org/masterbeekeeper.htm Alternative to 5/2 & 5/3
17 Mushroom Innoculation Fingerlakes Permaculture Institute May 16 & 17 11am \$20-\$40 http://www.fingerlakespermaculture.org	18 The Game of Logging, 7:30am- 4:30pm, \$152, http://www.dnr.cornell.edu/xt/forestconnect/GOL.html	19	20 Irrigation Options 4pm-7pm Cornell's Freeville Farm, 133 Fall Creek Rd (607) 687-4020	21 Grey Towers National Historic Site Bus Tour CCE-Broome 8:30am, return @ 5pm Cost is \$30pp, inc admission Bring lunch or add \$6.50 Mail check to: Steve Kutney, 1031 King Hill Rd, Endicott, NY 13760	22	23
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30

June

2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6 The Role of the Horse & the Farm Organism 9am-5pm Pfeiffer Center \$95 http://www.pfeiffercenter.org
7	8	9	10 Ties to the Land, 7-9pm, Honeoye, NY, \$30/couple, 607-255-2115	11	12	13 Maple Tubing workshop (570) 724-9120
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 Journey Level Queen Rearing Workshop Cornell University, Dyce Lab for Honey Bee Studies 9am-6pm, June 27 & 28 Fee is \$240 http://www.masterbeekeeper.org/masterbeekeeper.htm
28	29	30				



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Broome County

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